

In the Claims:

Please cancel claims 1, 3, and 4 without prejudice and add the following new claims 5 to 10:

Claims 1 to 4.(canceled)

5.(new) A power-supply-independent hot air dryer (3) for generating a hot air flow, said hot air dryer (3) comprising

a fuel reservoir (10) for a liquid fuel (6);

a fuel cell (8) that produces electrical energy (9) from said fuel (6) when said fuel (6) is supplied to the fuel cell, said fuel reservoir (10) being located outside of or not within said fuel cell (8);

an electrically powered blower (7) that generates an air stream when said electrical energy (9) is supplied to the blower (7);

a catalytic heating element (5) for heating said air stream to produce the hot air flow (2) when the catalytic heating element (5) is supplied with said fuel (6); and

means (11, 20, 21, 22) for jointly connecting said fuel reservoir (10) to said catalytic heating element (5) and to said fuel cell (8) to supply said fuel (6) to said fuel cell (8) in order to produce said electrical energy (9) and to simultaneously supply said fuel (6) to said catalytic heating element (5).

6.(new) The hot air dryer (3) as defined in claim 5, further comprising an electronic control unit (12) connected electrically with said blower (7) and said fuel cell (8) so that said electronic control unit (12) selectively controls supply of said electrical energy from said fuel cell to said blower (7) and other electrical components (13).

7.(new). The hot air dryer (3) as defined in claim 5, wherein said means (11, 20, 21, 22) for jointly connecting said fuel reservoir (10) to said catalytic heating element (5) and to said fuel cell (8) comprises an operating valve (11), a fuel line (20) connecting the fuel reservoir (10) with the operating valve (11), another fuel line (21) connecting the operating valve (11) with the fuel cell (8), and a further fuel line (22) connecting the operating valve (11) with the heating element (5), so that when said operating valve (11) is operated the fuel (6) flows from the fuel reservoir simultaneously to the fuel cell (8) and the heating element (5).

8.(new) The hot air dryer (3) as defined in claim 5, further comprising a viewing port (17) arranged in the vicinity of the fuel reservoir (10) and wherein at least a part of the fuel reservoir (10) is made of a transparent material in the vicinity of the viewing port (17).

9.(new) The hot air dryer (3) as defined in claim 8, further comprising a filling valve (16) connected with the fuel reservoir (10), through which additional fuel can be supplied to the fuel reservoir (10).

10.(new) The hot air dryer (3) as defined in claim 5, wherein said fuel cell is a polymer electrolyte membrane fuel cell, a direct methanol fuel cell, or a solid oxide fuel cell.